

REMARKS

I. Intr duction

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 10 and 11, claims 1 to 9 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claim 11 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by German Published Patent Application No. 196 52 807. While Applicants do not agree with the merits of this rejection, to facilitate matters, claim 11 has been amended herein without prejudice or waiver, thereby rendering moot the present rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claim 10 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by International Published Patent Application No. WO 98/19346. While Applicants do not agree with the merits of this rejection, to facilitate matters, claim 10 has been amended herein without prejudice or waiver, thereby rendering moot the present rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Allowed Claims 1 to 9

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 1 to 9 are allowed. The Examiner will note that claim 1 has been amended herein to correct a typographic error.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

KENYON & KENYON

Richard L. Mayer

Dated: 1/14/04

By: Mary V. Zene Reg No 30,333
Richard L. Mayer
Reg. No. 22,490

One Broadway
New York, New York 10004
(212) 425-7200

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JAN 22 2004
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